

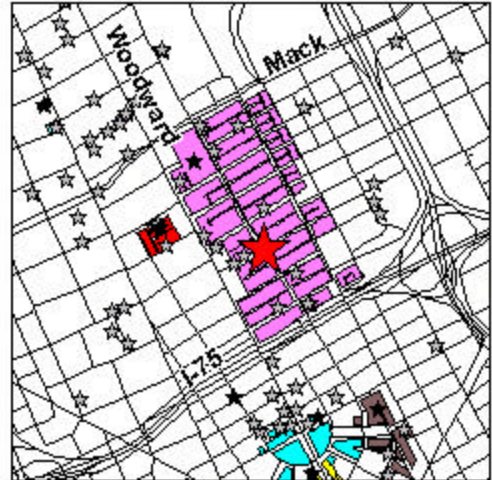
## **Woodward East Project Historic District**

General boundaries: John R, Alfred, Brush and alley north of Watson.

Local		
State	v	9/17/74
State Marker		
National	v	1/21/75



North side of 200 Block Alfred



### **Historic overview:**

Woodward East is located on land that may be traced back to a concession by the French Commandant of Fort Detroit, Monsieur Joseph Lemoyne, made in the year 1747 to Eustache Gamelin, an early settler. The long and narrow property passed through several owners before coming into the possession of a famous early Irish trader John Askin, from his wife's family after their marriage in 1772. Askin's youngest daughter Adelaide married Elijah Brush, and the property later became the famous Brush farm.

The land was developed in the second half of the nineteenth century when Detroit was becoming an important industrial center. Edmund Askin Brush, Elijah's son, supervised the subdivision into hundreds of residential lots. Of the three residential streets in the Woodward East area, Watson was the first to be opened in 1854. It was named after Joseph Watson, a friend of Edmund Brush. Edmund Place was named for Edmund A. Brush Jr., who died in early childhood. It opened in 1867. Alfred Street was named for another son, Alfred Erskine Brush, and opened in 1869.

With the passing of years, the Brush subdivision became a fine residential neighborhood. The families living in this area were closely knit socially, culturally, and religiously. The homes of many famous Detroit families could be found there. Woodward East was identifiable by the high-income nature of the families, the quality and size of the brick houses, and the magnificence of many churches. This concentration of religious edifices on Woodward between Grand Circus Park and Warren Avenue led someone in the 1880s to dub the area "Piety Hill", despite the fact that there was no hill. This name immediately stuck, and is still remembered by Detroiters today.

